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United Nations Register of Conventional Arms

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

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II. Information received from Governments

A. Composite table of replies of Governments[1]

State	*Data on exports*	*Data on imports*	*Explanation submitted in note verbale*	*Background information*
Sao Tome and Principe		Nil		No

[1] With the submission of Sao Tome and Principe, the number of replies received from Governments stands at 88.

Annex I

Views received from Governments in accordance with paragraph 4 (a) of General Assembly resolution 54/54 O

Iraq

[Original: Arabic]
[2 October 2000]

Views expressed by Iraq on behalf of the League of Arab States are contained in annex II to the present report.

Annex II

Views received from Governments in accordance with paragraph 4 of General Assembly resolution 54/54 I

Iraq

[Original: Arabic]
[2 October 2000]

The members of the League of Arab States have for some years past been expressing their views with regard to the entire matter of transparency in armaments, embracing as it does the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. These views are clear and well established and are based on a general orientation with respect to international disarmament issues and a particular, regional, one that is determined by the specific character of the situation in the Middle East. The points set forth hereunder convey the Arab position in this regard.

The members of the League of Arab States advocate transparency in armaments as a means of enhancing international peace and security and believe that, in order to be successful, any transparency mechanism must be guided by certain basic principles: it must be balanced, comprehensive and non-discriminatory, and it must enhance the national, regional and international security of all States in conformity with international law.

The United Nations Register of Conventional Arms represents a long-overdue first attempt by the international community to address the transparency issue at a global level. Despite the fact that the potential value of the Register as a global confidence-building measure and early-warning mechanism cannot be questioned, it has encountered a number of problems. Most noticeably, approximately one half of the States Members of the United Nations have consistently refrained from submitting data to the Register.

In this context, the members of the League of Arab States are of the view that the scope of the Register must be expanded, particularly as the experience of past years has shown that the Register, which is limited to seven categories of conventional arms, will not attract universal participation. Numerous States, including the members of the League, do not consider that the Register, given its present limited scope, adequately meets their security needs. The future success of the Register is therefore contingent upon the willingness of the members of the international community to engage in greater transparency and to build greater confidence. In our view, and as envisaged in the Register's founding resolution (General Assembly resolution 46/36 L), an expanded register including data on advanced conventional weapons, on weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, and on high technology with military applications would represent a more balanced, more comprehensive and less discriminatory instrument attracting a larger number of regular participants.

The Middle East region represents a special case in this context, and one where the qualitative imbalance in armaments is striking and where transparency and confidence can only come about if approached in a balanced and comprehensive way. Applying transparency in the Middle East region to seven categories of conventional weapons while ignoring more advanced, more sophisticated or more

lethal armaments, such as weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, is an approach that is neither balanced nor comprehensive. It will not yield the desired results, especially since the Register does not take into consideration the existing situation in the Middle East, where Israel continues its occupation of Arab territories, maintains its possession of the most lethal weapons of mass destruction and is still the only State in the region that is not a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as it persists in defying repeated calls by the international community to accede to the Treaty and to place all of its nuclear facilities under the full-scope safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency. It was this that prompted the States parties to the Treaty meeting at the 2000 Review Conference to stress that it was essential for Israel to take these steps.

The members of the League of Arab States regret that the Group of Governmental Experts convened in 2000 to consider the continuing operation of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and its further development failed, as had previous meetings of experts, to expand the scope of the Register to include military holdings and procurement from national production and that it also failed to incorporate weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons. This is incompatible with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 46/36 L, by which the Register was established.

This failure indicates the deadlock that has afflicted the operation of the Register and its consequent inadequacy in its present form to function as an effective means of building confidence or as an early-warning mechanism.

In the light of the above, the members of the League of Arab States are of the view that their aforesaid concerns must be addressed effectively and in such a manner as to ensure universal participation in the Register and hence its fulfilment of the role assigned to it as a means of building confidence and an early-warning mechanism that can be relied upon.